

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED NATIONAL REGISTER/GEORGIA REGISTER NOMINATION

Name: First Federal Savings and Loan Association Headquarters

Location: 132 East Broughton Street, Savannah, Chatham County

Description: First Federal Savings and Loan Association Headquarters in downtown Savannah is a six-story, mid-20th century commercial building constructed in the International Style. Although the building is within the National Register-listed Savannah Historic District, due to its 1961 construction date, it is considered noncontributing to the district. The building's modern structural and finish materials are typical of the style and complement the simplicity of the cubical and rectilinear forms of its design. The exterior is clad in smooth polished concrete panels and features a flat roof, cantilevered awnings, columns wrapped in multi-colored ceramic tile, and aluminum-framed ribbon windows encased in simple projecting frames made of cast concrete. The interior is characterized by an open lobby and mezzanine that defines the public space at street level and features original finishes of terrazzo, walnut paneling, aluminum, and the same ceramic tile found on the exterior. Open office spaces featured historically on the upper floors were converted to hotel rooms during a recent rehabilitation.

Acreage & Boundary Explanation: Less than one acre, following the current and historic legal boundary for the property

Period of Significance: 1961-1975

NR Criteria & Areas of Significance: Criteria A and C, Commerce and Architecture

Statement of Significance: First Federal Savings and Loan Association Headquarters is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the area of commerce as the headquarters of the largest savings and loan institution in the Savannah area at the time of the building's construction. The company was a successful and prolific Savannah savings institution and mortgage lender for nearly 50 years and served as a prominent lender during a period of major development and expansion in the city. Its downtown location, at the intersection of two main commercial streets, along with its six-story height and new modern design, identified the association headquarters as the lender of choice in new cutting-edge development. The building is also significant at the local level under Criterion C in the area of architecture as an excellent example of the International Style as applied to a large, commercial headquarters building in downtown Savannah. Designed by local architects, Levy and Kiley, the building incorporates key elements of the International Style in its asymmetry, lack of ornamentation, smooth flat surfaces, and ribbon windows.

Suggested Level of Significance: Local

Sponsor: The nomination is sponsored by M/A Capital Ventures – Savannah LLC, and nomination materials were prepared by Ward Architecture + Preservation.

